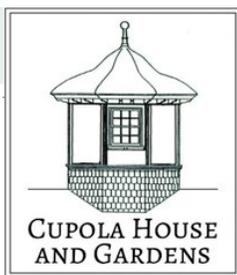


The Cupola House Association, Inc.



Fall 2023
Volume 2, Number 2



The Cupola House Newsletter

THE PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

F2024 CUPOLA HOUSE MEMBERSHIP WELCOME AND F2023 ANNUAL REPORT

As you gaze upon the Cupola House and Gardens, you can sometimes imagine tales of a bygone era, where elegance was a way of life. We may conjure up images of people strolling through the gardens and going in and out of a house that now stands as a resolute guardian of memories etched in the very essence of the structure. Each curve and twist of the architecture weaves a story of craftsmanship and artistry which visitors still marvel at today. And the story of the removal of the first-floor woodwork 105 years ago still affects us. We continue to work on trying to bring that back home, but the fact that it was so beautifully replicated in the 1960's by local craftsmen is a fantastic testimony to our survival and relevance today. Stay tuned for more developments.

But I digress...this is supposed to be a time to share how we are doing via an Annual Report which our By-Laws direct us to share each year.

It's about more than just numbers though, but I do want to share some with you, so you can better understand what your membership participation means from a broader perspective.

A portion of each membership (\$5.00) is reinvested in the Cupola House Association, Inc. on an annual basis and that investment is held in a protected, restricted fund. Our total income for 2023 fiscal year was \$28,422.26. Our total expenses for FY2023 were \$43,725.07. The negative cash flow of \$15,303.71 was covered by surplus from FY2022. We had record profits generated from our biennial major fundraiser, Easels 2022, which was put into a Money Market so we could draw on that to help cover any overages.

The Cupola House Association, Inc., website was modified to allow new and returning members to pay by credit card using the Stripe System.

There has been a big push to recruit and train additional Docents for the Cupola House and we hope to be able to open our doors to the public more often in the future. We currently have 19 docents who spent 75 hours offering tours with additional special tours for 568 guests.

Our beautiful gardens are a source of constant joy and inspiration because of the efforts of the 23 weeders (several are new this year) with about 10 being here most Wednesdays — even on the hot days of summer. They work an average of 3 hours per week with a conservative estimate of 1200 hours spent on the Cupola House Gardens alone! Last fall 2,167 bulbs were planted to the absolute delight of our visitors as well as our gardeners. Accolades are given often and are justifiable.

Last year, we had 25 Community Christmas Trees in the garden area with over 12,000 warm white lights and imaginative decorations adding to the existing magical ambience.

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DID YOU KNOW?

There are several ways you, as a Cupola House Association member, can participate in community events. In an effort to streamline signups this year, a SignUp Genius account has been created that will allow us to better manage everyone's time and prevent duplication of efforts. Look for links in the coming weeks to sign up for decorating Christmas trees, baking Christmas cookies

BY LOUISE ARTMAN

and providing docent time during the Candlelight Tour Wassail Bowl.



We now have SignUp Genius!!

FALL 2023



CALENDAR OF EVENTS

September 2023

- 9/14: CHA Board Meeting
- 9/30: Membership Garden Reception

October 2023

- 10/12: CHA Board Meeting
- 10/13: Cocktail Party**
- Auction Donation by CHA to Chowan Hospital Foundation
- 10/26: Albemarle Antiquarians**

November 2023

- 11/9 : CHA Board Meeting
- 11/29-30: Community Christmas Trees Decorating in the Garden

December 2023

- 12/14 – CHA Board Meeting
- 12/8–9: Wassail Bowl
- Annual Christmas Candlelight Tour



*** Indicates private, fee-based requested tours for special interest groups. While these tours require Cupola House Association resources and knowledgeable tour guides, they are not open either to the public or to our membership and we have to suspend other tours during that time. We are a viable resource to the community and a visit to Edenton is not complete without seeing the Cupola House and Gardens.*



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE (CONT'D FROM PAGE 1)

Social Media is an increasingly important medium for us to generate interest in The Cupola House. Since the first of the year, we have had a dedicated volunteer Board member take on the responsibility to develop and post information on the social media platforms. We have seen a 17% increase on Instagram with flat numbers for Facebook. While we still publish a printed Newsletter, we also offer the contents online, which is new for us.

Lastly, the Cupola House and Gardens, as well as other historic sites, all have stories which bring them alive, becoming a source of local identity and pride, connecting residents to their community's history and enriching the collective spirit. Community engagement through restoration projects fosters a sense of pride and ownership, with volunteers working together to protect their shared heritage.

Membership Reception

Tour of Private Gardens in
Historic Edenton, NC

Easels in the Gardens




April 26-27, 2024
10:00 am - 4:00 pm

- Private Gardens
- Historic Public Gardens, including newly opened Hayes Garden
- Plein-Air Artists On-Site
- Art in Bloom Exhibit
- Artists' Paintings for Sale
- Garden Party
- Boogie on Broad

Proceeds benefit the
Historic 1758 Cupola House and Gardens



2024 VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

NEWS FROM THE CUPOLA HOUSE GARDENS

BY: SHERRY JORDAN

WEEDERS EXPAND COMMUNITY OUTREACH

Our wonderful group of Wednesday Weeders has been approached about helping to bring the Shepard-Pruden Library gardens and fountain back to life. This dedicated group of volunteers has agreed to take on the project as part of our community outreach. Sherry Jordan is guiding the work and works with many of the Wednesday Weeders to remove the old landscape fabric and add soil and plants to the beds. Plans are underway to work on other beds so that this will be an inviting and useful addition to our library for the community. Jared Jacavone, librarian, is starting a seed exchange and a tool sharing program to encourage gardening. We will use many pollinator plants to help children understand their importance, useful for children's programs.

Shepard-Pruden Library fountain and garden project



SPECIAL SHOUT OUT TO THE CHOWAN COUNTY MAINTENANCE STAFF WHO REPAIRED THE FOUNTAIN AND REPLACED ITS STONES, SETTING THE PACE FOR REVITALIZED FLOWER BEDS BY OUR WEEDER GROUP.

MEMBER SPOTLIGHT

Our talented Board member, Don Jordon, continues to make progress on the recreation of the "8 Arm Mahogany Chairs" made by Samuel Black that originally sat in Francis Corbin's Cupola House dining room. Don received permission to create exacting templates of one of the four remaining original armchairs when it was displayed in Edenton for the 250th anniversary of the Cupola House. Don is close to completing the fifth armchair of the eight he is planning. The Board has agreed to place one of Don's armchairs on loan to the Museum of the Albemarle as a part of their upcoming exhibit entitled *Crafted From Wood*, which opens on November 9, 2023. The armchair will be displayed for the first year of the three year exhibit alongside the piecrust, ball-and-claw round tea table that compelling evidence points to as also being a part of the commission created by Black for Corbin's Cupola House. During the exhibit, Don's other four completed armchairs will be on display in the Cupola House dining room as he works to complete the last three examples.



“The Cupola House is fortunate to have a Board member with Don's well recognized talents. He has worked tirelessly for decades in examining, exploring, restoring, and preserving this nationally recognized structure.”

The Cupola House is fortunate to have a Board member with Don's well recognized talents. He has worked tirelessly for decades in examining, exploring, restoring, and preserving this nationally recognized structure. There is no doubt that Don literally knows more about the construction of the Cupola House than any other living individual. It was Don's discovery of the nine modern gouges needed to exactly replicate Black's armchairs, based on the templates he created, that opened the door to the knowledge that the same nine tools would replicate all the original woodwork found in the Cupola House, both interior and exterior, and that three of the nine tools would replicate all the carving on the piecrust round tea table that will be displayed in the exhibit. This led to the obvious conclusion that all three, the house, the armchairs, and the round tea table, were created with the same original tools,

therefore pointing to their creation by a single craftsman, now shown to be Samuel Black. And this is just one example of the discoveries made over the years through Don's efforts.

Those that know Don know that he does not seek the limelight, but some years ago he did agree to participate in an article written about his career for the N C State alumni magazine. A copy of the photo from that article is included here. With the prospect of the return of the original first floor Cupola House woodwork from the Brooklyn Museum, hopefully in the next several years, who better than Don to lead those efforts and oversee that project. When you see Don, please thank him for all his years of dedication and service to our organization and for sharing his talents to preserve and discover the many secrets of one of the most important structures in our country, the Cupola House.

The Birth of the Cupola House Association, Inc

In February 1918, it was discovered that Miss Tillie Bond, the last descendant of Dr. Samuel Dickinson still living in the 1758 Cupola House, had sold the woodwork of the house (including the front and back doors) to the Brooklyn Museum of Fine Arts in New York City. Five days later as woodwork was being removed, ten citizens met in the law office of W. D. Pruden to devise a plan to save the house. With their efforts, the second floor woodwork and staircase were purchased back from the Brooklyn Museum of Fine Arts. Thus began the journey of the Cupola House Association, Inc. to purchase the house and the land around it creating what has become a living house museum that is now a National Historic Landmark.

*Original Dining Room wood work currently on display in the Brooklyn Museum of Fine Arts
Photo from brooklynmuseum.org*



The Cupola House Association, Inc.

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cupolahouse.org

The 1758 Cupola House and Gardens



The 1758 Cupola House and Gardens A National Historic Landmark

408 South Broad Street
Edenton, NC 27932



Special Events Availability

The 1758 Cupola House and Gardens are available for garden weddings, photo shoots for weddings and graduations, Easter Egg Hunts, garden parties and more! Contact Event Co-Chairpersons for more information.

events.cupolahouse@gmail.com

A Bit of History

Built in 1758 for Francis Corbin, the Cupola House was looked out over Edenton Bay for over 250 years. Francis Corbin was a land agent for John Carteret, Earl of Granville, who was one of the last English Lords Proprietors. The building, with its trademark cupola, was built by Corbin at Lord Granville's instruction as a space in which his business affairs could be "commodiously transacted." It is one of the best examples of Jacobean architecture south of Connecticut and is one of North Carolina's most significant early dwellings.

Cupola House Dwellers

With the death of Francis Corbin in 1767, the house was eventually sold in 1777 to Dr. Samuel Dickinson whose descendants used it as their home for 141 years. It was in 1918 that the house and surrounding land were purchased by the newly formed Cupola House Association in order to save this important historic property.

Cupola House Architecture and Furnishings

The architecture of the Cupola House has been extensively studied since the house was acquired by the Cupola House Association. Interesting design features are the second story jetty overhang, the Georgian pediments of the interior that jut up into the ceiling, and the lanterned cupola itself.

The home has been furnished with period pieces as well as some that are original to the Dickinson and Bond families. Copies of the original dining room chairs are currently being built by Don Jordan, local furniture master craftsman.

Cupola House Gardens

The Colonial Revival Gardens are featured in Heritage Gardens of North Carolina and the Garden Conservancy.

The garden design is based roughly on the second C. J. Sautler 1769 Map of Edenton. The fencing, arbor and walks were completed in 1975. With the exception of the Red Spider Lily that dates to the 1870s, both the rear herb garden and the front flower garden are filled with native and other introduced plants that would reasonably have been grown prior to 1800. The plant database and additional photographs are available for viewing at www.cupolahouse.org

www.cupolahouse.org



Rear Herb Garden designed to reflect the design of the Cupola House front door bottom panel! Photo from www.cupolahouse.org

Front gardens looking out from the south window of the cupola



The 1758 Cupola House is part of the Historic Edenton Museum Trail of the Edenton Trolley Tour. Tickets may be purchased at the Penelope Barker House Welcome Center where the tour begins.

The Cupola House Gardens are free and open to the public daily 9 am–4:30 pm. Docent guided tours of the house are available for purchase at the Historic Edenton State Historic Site Visitor Center located at 108 N. Broad St. Docent guided tours of the house (with donations) are available Sundays, noon–3pm, April–November.



CHECK OUT OUR NEW BROCHURE!
LOOK FOR THEM AT VISITOR ENTRY POINTS THROUGHOUT TOWN



The Cupola House is a historic house museum in Edenton, North Carolina. Built in 1756-1758, it is the second oldest building in Edenton, and the only known surviving example in the American South of a "jutt," or overhanging second floor. It was declared a National Historic Landmark in 1970. [Wikipedia](#)

CUPOLA HOUSE ASSOCIATION, INC.

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www.cupolahouse.org



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